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ABSTRACT

The Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS) was developed by the Texas Education Agency (TEA), in response to Texas House Bill 72 (1984), which mandated a new basic skills assessment program for mathematics, reading, and writing at grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and 11. This document is one in a series of Instructional Strategies Guides designed to familiarize Texas educators with the types of strategies employed in assessing learner mastery of TEAMS objectives and to provide suggested instructional activities that can be used to promote mastery of those objectives. This guide focuses on the TEAMS writing objectives for grade 3. It provides a detailed description of the test items used to measure each writing objective. The nine objectives are subsumed under five skill areas: (1) mechanics (capitalization, punctuation, and spelling); (2) English usage; (3) sentence formation; (4) proofreading; and (5) organization/appropriate response to topic (informative/descriptive writing, informative/narrative writing, expressive/narrative writing). The following information is provided for six of the objectives: (1) a description of the objective; (2) a sample item; (3) test questions; (4) answer choices; (5) answer analysis for the sample item; (6) instructional emphases; and (7) possible instructional activities. (JAZ)

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TEAMS

INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES GUIDE

WRITING
GRADE 3

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August 1986

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TEAMS INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES GUIDE

WRITING

GRADE 3

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* Objectives measured with a written composition will be addressed in a separate publication.

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INTRODUCTION

During 1980-1985 the Texas Education Agency (TEA) administered a criterion-referenced testing program, the Texas Assessment of Basic Skills (TABS). That program was designed to measure minimum basic skills in mathematics, reading, and writing at Grades 3, 5, and 9. In July 1984, under the provisions of House Bill 72, a new basic skills assessment program was mandated in mathematics, reading, and writing at Grades 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, and 11. In response, development of the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills (TEAMS) was instituted by TEA during the 1985-86 school year.

School district personnel from across Texas participated in all aspects of the development of TEAMS. Basic skills objectives were selected after a thorough review of the State Board of Education Rules for Curriculum, GE4 450 01, (Essential Elements). Under TEA supervision measurement specifications and test items were developed for each objective. Statewide field testing was conducted to ensure the quality of test items. The State Board of Education then approved the TEAMS test for administration.

Because of the significance of the TEAMS program, TEA is providing Texas educators with instructional strategies guides for all objectives measured on each TEAMS examination. These guides describe the TEAMS objectives as well as instructional considerations and activities that can be used to promote mastery of TEAMS objectives.

This instructional strategies guide focuses on the TEAMS writing objectives for Grade 3. It provides a detailed description of the test items used to measure each writing objective. In addition, a brief instructional analysis is provided for each objective as are instructional activities that can help students master the objective.

Texas educators will undoubtedly vary in the ways they wish to promote learner mastery of the TEAMS objectives. Thus, the instructional components of this guide are <u>not</u> intended to be prescriptive. Teachers should view suggested activities as potential approaches that lead to mastery of the TEAMS objectives.

<u>Components of the Instructional Strategies Guide</u>

Nine TEAMS writing objectives are measured at the third grade level. These objectives are subsumed under one of five skill areas. The distribution of the writing objectives by skill area is shown on the next page.

SKILL AREA	OBJECTIVE
Mechanics	Capitalization Punctuation Spelling
English Usage	English Usage
Sentence Formation	Sentence Formation
Proofreading	Proofreading
Organization/Appropriate Response to Topic	Informative/Descriptive Writing Informative/Narrative Writing Expressive/Narrative Writing

This guide provides the following information for each of the writing objectives included in the TEAMS Grade 3 test.

Description of the objective. This section provides a succinct overview of the objective's focus.

Sample item. An illustrative sample item follows the description of each objective. This item is consistent with the test specifications for the objective, hence is representative of the TEAMS items used to measure students' mastery of the objective.

Test questions. To provide a more detailed view of how each TEAMS objective is assessed, the next section provides a description of the test question. For example, Grade 3 spelling items present a stimulus or test question. Test items for other third grade writing objectives present directions followed by four answer choices. This component of the guide provides these directions as well as a list of rules eligible for testing.

Answer choices. The next section deals with the response to each multiple-choice test item. Important characteristics of the answer choices are described.

Answer analysis for sample item. An analysis of the answer choices from the sample item is then provided for objectives measured by multiple-choice items, that is, all objectives except composition. This analysis explains why the correct answer is right and why the incorrect answers are wrong.

Instructional emphases. Considerations relevant to the design of instructional sequences for each TEAMS objective are described in this section. These instructional analyses are not intended to represent the only important points associated with instruction aimed at a particular objective. However, it is hoped that these discussions will stimulate educators' consideration of each objective.

Possible instructional activities. A final section discusses several instructional activities for each objective that Texas educators may consider as they organize their instructional plans.

Use of the Instructional Strategies Guide

This TEAMS instructional strategies guide is designed to accomplish two goals. First, the guide enables Texas educators to become familiar with the types of strategies employed to assess learner mastery of the TEAMS Grade 3 writing objectives. Educators who wish to learn more about how the TEAMS objectives are tested should consult the TEAMS objectives and measurement specifications available at cost from TEA. The level of detail provided in this instructional strategies guide should provide sufficient information for educators to design effective instructional sequences. Second, each instructional strategies guide provides suggestions for instructional activities that can be used to promote mastery of TEAMS objectives.

The specific setting in which a given district chooses to provide instruction in the TEAMS objectives will influence the way in which the materials in this guide can be employed. The format of the guide permits flexible use.

TEAMS ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS OBJECTIVES

WRITING: GRADE THREE

Six of the nine TEAMS third grade writing objectives are measured by multiple-choice items that generally present four words or groups of words, one of which is written correctly. Each test item contains four answer choices, only one of which will be correct. All possible answer choices for multiple-choice items will be indicated by ovals appearing before or below a word or group of words. The test items represent the types of writing that students might produce in school or at home, such as letters, stories, and descriptions. The objectives tested in this part of the writing section of the TEAMS third grade examination are, according to skill area:

- Mechanics
  - Capitalization
  - Punctuation
  - Spelling
- English Usage
- Sentence Formation
- Proofreading

The remaining three objectives require the student to write a composition. Only one of these objectives will be tested each year. The objectives eligible for testing in this part of the writing section of the TEAMS third grade examination are:

- Organization/Appropriate Response to Purpose and Audience
  - Informative/Descriptive Writing
  - Informative/Narrative Writing
  - Expressive/Narrative Writing

SKILL AREA: MECHANICS

The skill area of mechanics includes three objectives, namely, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. For test items measuring capitalization, the student will be presented with four versions of the same sentence, one of which is capitalized correctly, then asked to select the version that contains correct capitalization. For test items measuring punctuation, the student will be presented with four sentences, one of which is punctuated correctly, then asked to select the sentence that contains correct punctuation. For test items measuring spelling, the student will be presented with a sentence that is missing a word, then asked to select the correct spelling of the missing word from four possible spellings.

Objective 1: Demonstrate knowledge of standard uses of capitalization.

This objective requires students to identify which one of four versions of the same sentence employs correct capitalization.

Sample Item

Read each sentence below. Find the sentence that has capital letters in the right places. Mark your answer.

- ○ I went to the store on Tuesday.
- ○ i went to the store on Tuesday.
- ○ i went to the store on tuesday.
- ○ I went to the Store on Tuesday.

Test Questions

1. Four answer choices, as described below, will constitute each test question.
2. Preceding the four answer choices will be the instructions, "Read each sentence below. Find the sentence that has capital letters in the right places. Mark your answer."
3. The correctly capitalized sentence will demonstrate the correct usage of one or more of the following capitalization rules.

a. Capitalize the first word of a sentence.

b. Capitalize the pronoun "I."

c. Capitalize the first letter of a person's name.

d. Capitalize the names of days of the week.

Answer Choices

1. A test item will consist of four versions of a simple sentence. Only one version will demonstrate correct capitalization.

2. The correct answer will illustrate one or more of the four capitalization rules listed above.

3. Each incorrect answer will contain violations of one or more of the aforementioned capitalization rules. Additionally, an incorrect answer choice may include one or more instances of unnecessary capitalization.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. The first answer choice is correct. The pronoun "I," which is also the first word of the sentence, is correctly capitalized. The proper noun "Tuesday," designating a day of the week, is also correctly capitalized.

2. The second answer choice is incorrect because the pronoun "I," which is also the first word of the sentence, is not capitalized. "Tuesday" is correctly capitalized.

3. The third answer choice is incorrect because neither "I" nor "Tuesday" is capitalized.

4. The fourth answer choice is incorrect because the common noun "store" is unnecessarily capitalized, and the proper noun "Tuesday" is not capitalized.

Instructional Emphases

Capitalization signals important differences between words. For instance, students at this level can begin to appreciate that proper nouns take on a more individualized meaning than common nouns. Names of people, specific places, and days of the week provide important information and are easily recognized in sentences because they are capitalized. In addition, students can learn the roots of composition

structure by recognizing that the beginning of every sentence is signified by capitalizing the first letter of the first word.

The TEAMS third grade examination measuring this objective requires students to recognize standard uses of capital letters. Familiarize students with these rules by providing frequent review instruction and practice. Using such visual aids as calendars and pictures that represent proper and common nouns to help demonstrate capitalization usage should prove helpful in promoting learner mastery of this objective.

Possible Instructional Activities

Name Game

Starting at one end of the room, have students say their first names and something they like that begins with the same first letter as that name (for example, "My name is Iris, and I like ice cream."). Have all students write a sentence in which these two pieces of information are combined (for example, "Iris likes ice cream."). After all students have said their names and favorite things, go over each sentence so students can check to see that they have correctly capitalized names. Make sure that students also capitalize other proper nouns that students identify as the things they like (for example, "My name is Steve, and I like Saturdays.").

I, Me, Mine

Have your students write a few simple sentences, in paragraph form, telling about themselves. Encourage them to use the first person so they can practice using the pronoun "I," which is always capitalized. You may wish to create a list of questions to be answered in the paragraph (for example, "What is your name?" "What is your favorite day of the week?" "What is your best friend's name?")

Choice Capitals

Students can develop the ability to distinguish a correctly capitalized sentence from sentences that are not correctly capitalized. Write on the board three similar sentences that contain the pronoun "I." Correctly capitalize only one of the sentences and make at least one capitalization error in the other two sentences. For example:

My mom and i mailed the letters.
She told me that I could put them in the mailbox.
was I tall enough?

Point to each sentence and have the students vote on which sentence they think exhibits correct capitalization.

Objective 2: Demonstrate knowledge of standard punctuation.

This objective requires students to identify which one of four sentences contains correct punctuation.

Sample Item

Read each sentence below. Find the sentence that has the right punctuation. Mark your answer.

- ○ I was born on April 6 1978.
- ○ Spring is my favorite season
- ○ When is your birthday?
- ○ Is it in the spring.

Test Questions

1. Four answer choices, as described below, will constitute each test question.
2. Preceding each set of four sentences will be the instructions, "Read each of the sentences below. Find the sentence that has the right punctuation. Mark your answer."
3. The correctly punctuated sentence will demonstrate correct usage of one or more of the following punctuation rules:
   a. Periods are required at the end of declarative and imperative sentences.
   b. Question marks are required at the end of interrogative sentences.
   c. Commas are required to separate the day and year in a date.
4. The correctly punctuated sentence will not contain any internal punctuation except when the day and year in a date are presented. In this case an internal comma is required to separate the day and year as stipulated above.

Answer Choices

1. A test item will consist of four different sentences. Only one sentence will contain correct punctuation.

2. The correct answer choice will illustrate one or more of the three punctuation rules listed above.

3. Each incorrect answer will contain one or more of the following rule violations:

   a. the omission of a period or question mark at the end of a sentence

   b. the substitution of a period for a question mark at the end of an interrogative sentence

   c. the omission of a comma between the day and year in a date

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. The first answer choice is incorrect because the comma required between the day and year in the date has been omitted. A comma is required between "6" and "1978."

2. The second answer choice is incorrect because the period has been omitted from the end of the sentence.

3. The third answer choice is correct. The sentence is an interrogative sentence, and it correctly terminates with a question mark.

4. The fourth answer choice is incorrect because a period has been substituted for a question mark at the end of the sentence. The sentence is an interrogative sentence and, therefore, requires a question mark after the word "spring."

Instructional Emphases

Periods, question marks, and commas constitute the basic elements of punctuation usage. These written symbols represent the pauses and varying inflections we use to vocalize our thoughts. For example, a question mark at the end of an interrogative sentence represents a raised inflection or voice tone. A period at the end of a sentence indicates a drop in voice tone.

Other uses of punctuation marks are based on conventions. At the third grade level, students should become familiar with standard comma usage in a written date. Inform students that this use of a comma allows readers to differentiate between the number representing the day and the number representing the year.

Alert students to question words that appear at the beginnings of interrogative sentences and to changes in word order that occur when a statement is transformed into a question. Write the date on the board each day and require students to copy it onto at least one assignment each day. By providing daily opportunities for students to read and to write both declarative and interrogative sentences--as well as dates--you can reinforce the three fundamental uses of periods, question marks, and commas that are tested on the third grade TEAMS examination.

Possible Instructional Activities

Date Identity

Have your students write on a piece of paper the exact dates of holidays and other significant dates you say aloud. Have them write the month, the number of the day, and the current year (for example, "July 4, 1986"). Ask them to write their own birth date. You may want to use a calendar to help them. Check their work to make sure they included the comma in each date.

Happy Endings

Produce large cards on each of which is written a word, a number, or a punctuation mark. These cards should be large enough to be held by students standing at the front of the class who will form declarative and interrogative sentences. For example, the interrogative sentence "Was Sharon born on May 5, 1978?" would be ultimately represented by nine students holding the following cards:

Provide a different card for each student in your class. Three students--the Comma, the Period, and the Question Mark--play special roles in this activity, so you may wish

to keep them standing off to the side while other students remain in their seats.

Dictate a declarative or interrogative sentence that can be formed with some of the words, numbers, and punctuation marks represented on your students' cards. When the appropriate words and numbers are standing in order at the front of the classroom, have the students in the sentence tell you which punctuation mark(s) is/are needed.

Repeat the activity until each student has stood in a sentence at least once.

Jumbled Pairs

Assemble word groups, each of which can be made into either a declarative or interrogative sentence. Jumble the words (for example, going we be will). Have your students make both a declarative and an interrogative sentence from each group of words (for example, "We will be going." and "Will we be going?"). After the class has finished, discuss each sentence and write it (or have it written) on the board so that students can make sure they used the correct punctuation in their sentences.

Objective 3: Recognize the correct spelling of commonly used words.

This objective requires students to recognize, from four possible spellings, the correct spelling of a word that is missing from a sentence.

Sample Item

Read the sentence. Find the right spelling of the word that goes in the blank. Mark your answer.

The _____ fell from the sky.

- ○ ran
- ○ rain
- ○ rane
- ○ rayn

Test Questions

1. A test item will consist of a sentence with a missing word. The correctly spelled version of the missing word is to be selected from among four possible choices.
2. The sentence will be preceded by the instructions, "Read the sentence. Find the right spelling of the word that goes in the blank. Mark your answer."
3. The word to be identified will exhibit regular sound-letter correspondence.

Answer Choices

1. Four possible spellings of the missing word will be presented. Only one will be spelled correctly.
2. Among the three incorrect versions, the most common misspellings of the word shall be presented.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. The first answer choice is incorrect because the "i" between "a" and "n" has been omitted.

2. The second answer choice is correct. This is the correct spelling of the word "rain."

3. The third answer choice is incorrect because the "i" between "a" and "n" has been omitted, and a final silent "e" has been added to create an incorrect long-vowel construction.

4. The fourth answer choice is incorrect because a "y" has been substituted for the medial "i" in "rain."

Instructional Emphases

Students learn to spell in two basic ways. One way students learn correct word spellings is through an acquired knowledge of spelling generalizations. In other words, students learn to spell by recalling, from memory, basic sound-letter associations. These associations are "generalized" by students and applied when students spell words that have similar sounds. For example, students learn that vowels "say their own name" in words with a final silent "e" (the long-vowel construction).

Encourage your students to use a systematic approach when they study spelling words. Knowledge of spelling rules can be acquired through careful study of new words. Have students look at a new spelling word and say it aloud. It is important that students hear the sound of each vowel and consonant. Next, students should spell the word by carefully writing each letter and comparing it to the presented word for accuracy. Finally, allow students to incorporate these visual, audio, and kinesthetic phases of word study into a practice format. With constant review and a steady presentation of new words, basic sound-letter associations can be retained and drawn upon as more complex words are presented at higher grade levels.

The other way that students learn correct word spellings is through an acquired knowledge of specific sight words. Thus, students can recall the correct spellings of commonly used words that are exceptions to sound-letter associations. Students should learn to recognize when a spelling word is not written as it sounds. You may call these "sight words" and encourage students to practice writing and recognizing these words until the words' spellings readily come to mind.

Possible Instructional Activities

Sound Search

Distribute prepared lists of spelling words. Show your students simple pictures that represent inanimate objects (for example, a dress). Allow the class to look at each picture without identifying the word represented in the picture. Ask students to say aloud any words from their list that have the same long or short vowel sound as the word represented in the picture (for example, "nest," "tent"). This can also be done for double consonants, consonant pairings (for example, ch, th, sh), and other constructions.

Alliteration

This activity emphasizes sight recognition and visual memory to aid in teaching spelling. Create alphabetical lists, each containing ten spelling words from spellers and readers. Distribute the lists such that three to five students use the same spelling words. (For example, if there were 30 students in your class you would distribute from 6 to 10 different lists.) Have students write alliterative sentences using as many of the spelling words from their lists as they can (for example, "Beth put on both of her bright blue boots before going to the bank."). After students have proofread their sentences for correct spelling, have a few students write their sentences on the blackboard. If you wish, students in the class can suggest additional spelling words that begin with the same letter as the other spelling words in the sentence.

Word Wrangler

Select groups of words that share a common trait (for example, words with double consonants like kitten or words that contain a final silent "e"). Write one group on the board, deliberately spelling certain words incorrectly. Ask individual students to identify a misspelled word and give the correct spelling aloud. Use the correctly spelled examples to demonstrate where the mistakes were in the incorrectly spelled words.

If you wish, the class can be divided into teams for this activity, with points awarded for correct identification of misspelled words and for correct spellings of those words. Should one team correctly identify a misspelling but give an incorrect spelling correction, have the other team attempt to give the correct spelling. Alternate between teams until the correct spelling is given.

Spelling Bee

An occasional spelling bee is not only instructional but can be stimulating and enjoyable as well. Instead of elimination for misspellings, a variation can be employed so that all students stay in the contest. Divide the class into two teams. Call on an individual student from one of the teams, then orally give that student a word to spell. Emphasize that team members cannot help one another. Alternate between teams for each word, awarding points for each correct spelling. If one student misspells a word, be sure to give the other team a chance to spell correctly the same word. Alternate between teams until the correct spelling is given. The winning team is the team that either reaches a certain number of points first or that has the most points at a predesignated time.

SKILL AREA: ENGLISH USAGE

Objective 4: Demonstrate knowledge of correct English usage.

This objective requires students to identify which one of four versions of the same sentence employs a correct verb form.

Sample Item

Read each sentence below. Find the sentence that uses words in the right way. Mark your answer.

- ○ Cassie goed home an hour ago.
- ○ Cassie went home an hour ago.
- ○ Cassie goes home an hour ago.
- ○ Cassie go home an hour ago.

Test Questions

1. Four answer choices, as described below, will constitute each test question.
2. Preceding the four answer choices will be the words, "Read each sentence below. Find the sentence that uses words in the right way. Mark your answer."
3. The following usage rules are eligible for testing:
   a. Verb Conjugation: A verb must be conjugated correctly.
   b. Subject-Verb Agreement: A verb must agree in number and in person with its subject.
   c. Verb Tense: A verb must agree in tense with the time sense of a sentence.

Answer Choices

1. A test item will consist of four versions of a simple sentence. Only one version will have the correct verb form.

2. Each sentence version will contain a word or phrase indicating past, present, or future time ("last Friday," "right now," "tomorrow").

3. Each version will contain a single main verb or a verb phrase consisting of a main verb and a present participle. It will contain neither compound elements nor words or phrases placed between the subject and verb of the sentence.

4. The verb conjugations that are used will be in the simple past, present, or future tense ("walked," "walk," "will walk") or in the continuous past or present tense ("was singing," "is singing").

5. The correct answer will illustrate:

   a. correct subject-verb agreement

   b. the correct verb form (conjugation and tense)

6. Each incorrect answer will contain one error representing one or more of the following English usage violations:

   a. Incorrect Verb Conjugation

      (1) an irregular verb conjugated as if it were regular (example of error: "Her brother gived her a kitten.")

      (2) the verb "be" used as a main verb (example of error: "She be nice.")

   b. Lack of Subject-Verb Agreement

      (1) number (example of error: "They takes the bus to school.")

      (2) person (example of error: "I always tells the truth.")

   c. Incorrect Verb Tense: A verb contradicting the time sense of the sentence (example of error: "Yesterday we fly our kites.")

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. The first sentence version is incorrect because it contains an irregular verb that is conjugated as a regular verb. The third-person singular past tense form of "go" is "went," not "goed."

2. The second version is the correct answer choice. This sentence illustrates correct subject-verb agreement and the correct conjugation and tense.

3. The third version is incorrect because it contains an error in tense. The phrase "an hour ago" indicates an action that took place in the past. "Goes" is a present-tense conjugation.

4. The fourth version is incorrect because it contains a verb form that violates both tense and number or person.

Instructional Emphases

Selecting a correct verb form involves paying attention to various dimensions of verb usage. These dimensions are tense, subject-verb agreement, and conjugation. In order to form verbs correctly, students must be able to identify time indicators, isolate subjects and verbs, and know regular and irregular verb conjugations.

A time indicator in a sentence is a word or phrase telling the reader when the described action takes place. Words or phrases such as "today," "yesterday," "tomorrow," "last week," and "next Monday" indicate whether the sentence describes past, present, or future time. You may wish to provide practice for your students in producing and identifying these time indicators, thereby allowing students to focus on time sense before selecting a verb form.

An ability to recognize the subject and verb in a sentence prepares the student for subject-verb agreement. Students must be able to select the verb form that corresponds with the subject in person and in number. Practice in subject-verb identification facilitates the selection of verb forms that agree with their subjects in these ways.

Finally, students must achieve a familiarity with the correct conjugations of regular and irregular verbs. In English, as in other languages, many frequently used verbs have irregular conjugations. (Some examples of these are "be," "do," "go," and "have.") Providing models as well as varied and constant practice probably stimulates thought processes more than asking students to memorize conjugations. Frequent oral and written practice will help students to internalize these verb forms and to acquire a familiarity with those that are irregular.

Students who are speakers of nonstandard dialects will wonder why some of these verb forms are different from those

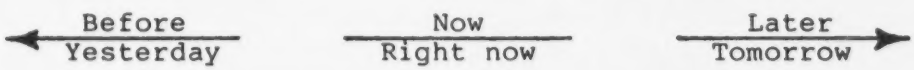
they use when speaking. You may wish to explain that people in this country speak in many different ways and that the forms they are learning are "standard" forms. Explain that one standard way of speaking and writing is necessary so that people from different backgrounds and parts of the country can communicate easily with one another.

When you have worked with verbs, you can familiarize students with the directions they will see on TEAMS English usage items for Grade 3. Remind students that selecting "the sentence that uses words in the right way" means choosing the sentence that uses the right verb.

Possible Instructional Activities

Before, Now, and Later

Provide each student with pencil and paper. Write at the top of the blackboard:



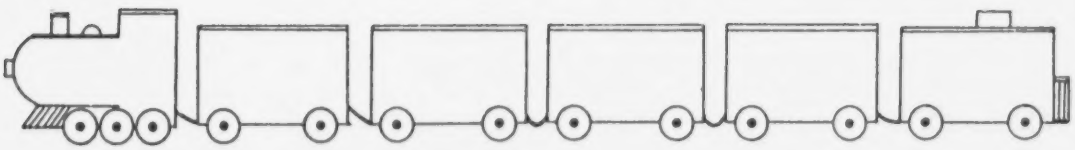
Say to students, "Yesterday is a word that talks about a time that already happened. It happened before. Can you think of another word that describes a time that happened before?" Have students generate a few more words and phrases designating times in the past (for example, "last week," "an hour ago," "last Saturday," "last year").

Ask students to write sentences using these terms. When students have completed their sentences, have each student read a sentence aloud. Discuss the idea that the sentences talk about events which happened before, in the past.

Repeat the process with "Now" and "Later." An example may arise such as, "Next weekend we're going to the zoo." You might accept without comment this use of the present progressive form to indicate a future event. Alternatively, you may wish to explain that "we're going to the zoo" needs an expression such as "next weekend" in order to describe an event that will take place at a later time.

Sentence Train

Create a series of six to ten simple but colorful train cars, approximately 4" x 6". Draw a period at the end of the caboose. Produce extra freight cars so that you can adjust the length of your train for sentences of varying lengths.



Hang your sentence train where it is visible to all students (such as above the chalkboard).

Next, produce word cards to be clipped onto the train cars. Begin with enough words to form a few simple sentences. For the verb in each sentence, create alternate forms of the same verb according to the eligible usage violation previously described. Write all words in black; write nonexistent verb forms in red.

Yesterday I <u>wrote</u> a wonderful story.
write
writes
writed (in red)
am writing

Last summer we <u>went</u> to Houston.
goed (in red)
go
goes
are going

Right now he <u>is eating</u> his sandwich.
ate
are eating
eats
eat

Next Friday I <u>will visit</u> my grandparents.
visited
visit
visits

Clip all of the words except for the verb onto the sentence train.

write | writes | writed | am writing | wrote

Place the verb cards below the sentence (in the chalk tray or clipped to a string strung across the board). Ask a student to select a verb card, place it on the empty train car, and read the sentence aloud. Ask other students whether the sentence is correct. If it is incorrect, discuss why it is incorrect. If it is correct, have students copy the sentence on their papers.

Continue with several sentences, some of which require different forms of the same verb.

Time Travel

Produce a list of simple sentences, each of which contains a time indicator, a subject, and a verb. Some sentences should be present tense, some past, and some future. Each sentence should have two other time indicators as follows:

Last Saturday
Right now
Tomorrow we will play softball.
(Students should be encouraged to use the future form employing "will.")

Yesterday
Now my father is giving me a quarter.
Next Friday

Last week I took a bath.
At this moment
In an hour

Have students complete each sentence in the tenses indicated.

Flashtime

Find or create a set of pictures representing persons engaged in various activities. In addition, produce large flash cards on which are written time indicators such as "Yesterday," "Today," and "Tomorrow." These two groups of cards are to be placed facedown in separate piles. Finally, provide every student with a pair of flash cards, one of which says "YES" and the other one of which says "NO."

For each sentence, you will call on one student to be "Time" and another to be "Activity." "Time" picks a time indicator card and "Activity" picks an activity card, each card from its respective facedown stack. The time and activity cards are then shown to the class.

Call on a student to form a sentence beginning with the time word (which will establish the verb tense used) and describing the activity depicted in the picture. The class indicates whether the verb was correct by raising their "YES" and "NO" cards. Discuss why the sentence is or is not correctly formed.

Continue by having each of the three students select the next student to fulfill the same role (Time, Activity, sentence).

SKILL AREA: SENTENCE FORMATION

Objective 5: Demonstrate the ability to distinguish complete sentences from fragments.

This objective requires students to identify which one of four groups of words forms a complete sentence.

Sample Item

Read each group of words. Find the complete sentence. Mark your answer.

- ○ Under my bed.
- ○ My shoes were scattered.
- ○ Moved them to the closet.
- ○ A neat little row of shoes.

Test Questions

1. Four groups of words will be presented, as described below.
2. Preceding each set of four groups of words will be the instructions, "Read each group of words. Find the complete sentence. Mark your answer."

Answer Choices

1. Each group of words will begin with a capital letter and end with a period. One group will be a complete simple sentence. Each of the other three groups will be a sentence fragment.
2. The correct answer will be the complete sentence. This sentence will follow subject-verb-complement or subject-verb-modifier order.
3. Each incorrect answer will be a sentence fragment exemplifying one of the following:
   a. a word group with a subject but no predicate (example of error: "The shiny black horse.")

b. a word group with a predicate but no subject (example of error: "Walks to school every morning.")

c. a prepositional phrase (example of error: "Inside my boot.")

4. No answer choice shall exceed seven words in length.

Answer Analysis for Sample Item

1. The first answer is incorrect. A prepositional phrase standing alone is a sentence fragment.

2. The second answer is correct. It contains a subject and a predicate and is, therefore, a complete sentence.

3. The third answer is incorrect. It is a predicate lacking a subject and is, therefore, a fragment.

4. The fourth answer is incorrect. It is a subject lacking a predicate and is, therefore, a fragment.

Instructional Emphases

A complete sentence needs to contain a noun phrase functioning as a subject and a verb phrase functioning as a predicate. A group of words that lacks one or the other is not a complete sentence. Such a group is a sentence fragment, which means that it is only a piece of a sentence.

Another kind of sentence fragment is a prepositional phrase, a group of words consisting of a preposition and a noun phrase. (In this case, the noun phrase is not the subject of the sentence, but the object of the preceding preposition.)

At the third grade level, students taking the TEAMS test are required to distinguish complete sentences from the following three types of sentence fragments: a subject without a predicate, a predicate without a subject, and a prepositional phrase standing alone.

Possible Instructional Activities

United We Stand

Explain to students that every sentence can be divided into two parts: a subject, which is a noun phrase, and a

predicate, which is a verb phrase. The person, animal, or object that the sentence is saying something about is the subject. The predicate says something about the subject. Provide examples such as the following to illustrate your explanation. Show how each sentence can be divided into two parts.

The man in the gray suit / is my uncle.
My sister and I / share a bedroom.
This book / tells all about whales.

Write a few more sentences on the board, calling on individual students to tell you where the sentence should be divided. You may wish to call on other students to offer their own examples of sentences. Continue until students have gained proficiency at this skill.

Emphasize that the sentences that are on the board are complete sentences because they have both parts. Either of those parts standing alone is not a sentence.

United We Stand, Part 2

Distribute tagboard strips that have printed on them either noun parts or verb parts of sentences. Call a student to the front of the room and ask him to read what is on his card. Discuss why that part is not a complete sentence. Then ask another student who has the missing part of the sentence on her card to come to the front of the room and read her part aloud. Ask, then, a third student to read the whole sentence aloud, thereby attuning the students' ears to the sounds of complete sentences. Continue the exercise as long as students are interested and involved.

Divided We Fall

This activity can follow the above activity within the same lesson or on a subsequent day. Review with students the conclusion at which you previously arrived, namely, that a subject or a predicate by itself is not a sentence. Reaffirm that a sentence needs to have both.

Ask, "What else do we know about a sentence?" The answer you are looking for is that a sentence begins with a capital letter and ends with a period.

On the board, write a sentence fragment (subject with no predicate or predicate with no subject) that begins with a capital letter and ends with a period. (It may be helpful to use examples taken from the sentences used in the previous activity.)

Say something such as: "This group of words begins with a capital letter and ends with a period. Is it a sentence?" Obtain--or provide, if necessary--the response that the group of words is not a sentence because it is only a subject. A subject by itelf is only a fragment, a piece of a sentence.

Provide further practice in recognizing these two types of sentence fragments and in distinguishing them from complete sentences. These practice sessions can take the group discussion form as described above or they can consist of practice sheets on which students are asked to recognize, match, or complete sentence fragments.

Prep Talk

On the board, list three common prepositions such as "in," "under," and "on." Ask students what these words tell us about something ("place," "location," "where it is"). Request further examples and then call on students to create phrases. (Provide the first phrase: "in the classroom," for example.)

Explain that each of the phrases is called a prepositional phrase because it begins with a preposition. Circle or underline the preposition in each phrase.

Explain that there are also prepositions that tell us about things other than place. Prepositions such as "after" and "before" usually tell us about time. Prepositions such as "from," "about," and "of" give us other kinds of information. Ask for examples of prepositional phrases containing these additional prepositions.

Write one of the prepositional phrases generated with an initial capital letter and a final period. Ask whether the phrase can be a sentence by itself. Discuss the reasons why it cannot be a sentence, that is, it does not contain a subject or a predicate.

You may wish to demonstrate how a prepositional phrase can be a part of a subject or a part of a predicate. Reemphasize the fact that a prepositional phrase standing alone can never be a sentence.

SKILL AREA: PROOFREADING

Objective 6: Demonstrate the ability to proofread a written communication.

This objective requires students to identify an error in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, or English usage within a specified part of a communication.

Sample Items

Read each line below. In each line, one underlined part has a mistake in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, or in the way a word is used. Find the underlined part that has the mistake and mark the space under the mistake.

1. My cousin comed to live with us on June 20, 1985.
   ○ ○ ○ ○

2. Her name is Molly santos.
   ○ ○ ○ ○

3. She brought a tiny kiten named Tom.
   ○ ○ ○ ○

4. My mother loves that sweet cat
   ○ ○ ○ ○

Test Questions

1. Four sentences comprising a description or a story will be presented. Each sentence will be a test item containing four answer choices, as described below.

2. Preceding each set of four sentences will be the instructions, "Read each line below. In each line, one underlined part has a mistake in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, or in the way a word is used. Find the underlined part that has the mistake and mark the space under the mistake."

Answer Choices

1. Each sentence, each of which constitutes a test item, will contain four parts that are underlined. An underlined part shall include one or more words and/or numbers. One of the four underlined parts will contain an error in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, or usage. The other three underlined parts in the sentence will contain no mistakes.

2. The correct answer will be the underlined part of the sentence that contains an error in spelling, punctuation, capitalization, or usage. Only the errors defined as eligible for testing in each of these skill areas at Grade 3 will be eligible for testing in the proofreading section.

3. The three incorrect answers will be the underlined parts of the sentence that are written correctly.

4. No sentence shall exceed 15 words in length.

5. An underlined part may extend beyond a word to indicate that the punctuation mark or lack of punctuation shall be considered. An underlined part at the end of a sentence will extend beyond the final word to include the period or lack of a period. Whenever a date is tested, the entire date will be underlined.

Answer Analysis for Sample Items

NOTE: In the proofreading objective, although four sentences are grouped together as a story or description, each sentence actually constitutes a test item. In other words, each sentence--not each group of four sentences or word groups as in most writing objectives--contains a correct answer choice and three incorrect answer choices. Each sentence, or test item, is analyzed below.

1. The correct answer choice--in other words, the error--in the first sentence is "comed." The student is to indicate this answer by marking the oval that appears below this error. "Comed" represents an English usage error involving the conjugation of an irregular verb as a regular verb. The other three ovals appear below parts of the sentence that are written correctly.

2. The error and correct answer choice in the second sentence is "Molly santos." The last name should be capitalized.

3. The error and correct answer choice in the third sentence is "kiten," which is misspelled.

4. The fourth sentence contains a punctuation error. The error and correct answer choice is the underlined part of the sentence in which the word "cat" appears. It is the final word in the sentence, and the period at the end of the sentence is lacking.

Instructional Emphases

Proofreading involves looking for mistakes. Third graders are often accustomed to leaving this part of the writing process to their teacher. These young students can benefit from thinking of writing as a three-step process. Each step should be carried out by the student, who is the writer, before a written work is handed in. These three steps can be described as follows:

1. Think. Think about what you're going to write. Don't worry about the words yet. Just let your mind wander and see what ideas you can gather. If you wish, you can write these ideas as notes. Then you can look at them when you begin to write.

2. Write. Put your ideas on paper. Write them without worrying about mistakes.

3. Clean-up. This is when you check your work carefully for mistakes. Are your words spelled correctly? Did you use capital letters and punctuation marks in the right way? Did you use the right words? Write the corrections on your paper, and then write a final, good copy of your work.

Encourage your students to take responsibility for their work and to get into the habit of "screening" for mistakes before they hand in something they have written. When they come to you with questions concerning specific points of writing, positively reinforce this behavior with warmth and encouragement. If they feel comfortable coming to you with such questions, you can expect fewer errors to turn up in students' work. In such an atmosphere, students are apt to develop a more positive attitude about their own writing.

The proofreading objective on the TEAMS examination requires students to look for errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and English usage. Constant review and practice in these skill areas, individually and in combination, will help your students to develop the skills to recognize and correct errors.

Possible Instructional Activities

Looking for Trouble

Provide copies of paragraphs that contain errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage. Above each paragraph should appear a list of how many of each type of error the following paragraph contains. For example:

The following paragraph contains 3 spelling mistakes, 2 punctuation mistakes, 2 capitalization mistakes, and one mistake in the way a word is used. How many of these mistakes can you find?

> George Washington was a grayt man. He was born in Virginia on february 22 1732. When he growed up he joined the army and fot many brave battles. He became a general and helped to free Americans from the control of another country. He was the furst president when the United states became a free country He died in 1799.

For additional practice, you may wish to have students correct the errors they have found in a rewritten version of the paragraph.

Morning Fix-ups

Each morning, write a group of four sentences on the board, each sentence containing an error in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, or English usage. Each type of error should be represented once. Students are to sit at their desks and copy each sentence as it is written, circle the error, and rewrite the sentence correctly. The following are examples of groups of sentences that might appear on the board.

1. The man in the blue suit is Mr. gallegos.
2. He goes fiching with my father on Saturdays.
3. Sometimes they lets me go with them.
4. Do you like to go to Marble Lake.

* * *

1. My favorite writer is maurice Sendak.
2. Have you read any of his books
3. His picktures are wonderful.
4. I also like the strange stories he create.

You may wish to reinforce successful completion of this proofreading activity by asking students who have completed their work to raise their hands. (Remind students that their work must be legible in order for you to see if their

revised sentences are written correctly.) Check the work of these students. The first five or ten students to complete their work correctly might be given some special privilege for that day.

Discuss each sentence with the class before moving to another activity. Each day, call on different individuals to provide answers so that you can monitor students' mastery of this TEAMS objective.

Listen, Write, and Proof

Dictate to students a paragraph that contains eligible uses of capital letters and punctuation marks. Read the paragraph orally to your students three times: the first time, students should listen without writing; the second time, they should write what you read; and, the third time, they should look over their work for errors in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, and the way in which words are used. (Students might create usage errors despite hearing correct forms.)

Ask students to exchange papers and proofread each other's work. Each paper should then be checked by an additional proofreader, who then returns the paper to its owner. When students have their own papers, provide (on a distributed hand-out, on the chalkboard, or with an overhead projector) a correctly written version of the paragraphs. Discuss how proofreaders need to be very careful when looking for errors, which are often easy to miss.

NOTE: Activities in each of the four skill areas that comprise the proofreading objective may also be used in preparation for items appearing in this section of the TEAMS examination.